

Currently, I subscribe to a satellite TV service to receive analog TV reception and I have one television set for this purpose. Recently, I have installed an outdoor TV antenna VHF/UHF antenna system to receive digital over the air broadcasts. I am currently using a WIN-TV tuner card in my PC to receive digital TV broadcasts. I am able to receive the following digital TV stations reliably:

WJAR-DT 51
WPRI-DT 13
WLNE-DT 49
WEDN-DT 45
WCVB-DT 20
WGBH-DT 19
WGBX-DT 43

During the evening, I can often receive the following weaker digital TV stations:

WVIT-DT 35
WCTX-DT 39
WBZ-DT 30
WTIC-DT 31

Despite the weaker low power stations, digital television reception is far superior to analog reception. My PC/tuner card which is connected to the antenna system, receives only broadcasts over the air. Although I sometimes watch analog TV via the antenna, I prefer digital TV stations due to the perfect picture obtained. I use my other TV in the living room which has satellite TV for most of my analog viewing since a stronger signal is required for analog TV. I plan to purchase a regular HDTV set in the next few months as prices continue to fall.

I personally support the FCC's efforts to further the transition to digital TV. I only wish it would happen sooner. Digital TV is a major improvement over analog TV. Although most people think HDTV when they think digital television, it also means easier over the air reception. Many individuals in the U.S. may discover that over the air reception is viable again due to the digital nature of these signals. Perhaps the reason cable and satellite TV flourished is because of the deficiencies in the old NTSC digital format. I am seriously considering eliminating my satellite TV when the digital transition is complete.

Although, I would prefer all analog television broadcasting to stop at the end of 2006 as planned, I am doubtful it will actually happen. If analog television continues past 2006, then I recommend the following steps be taken in 2007:

- (1) Broadcasters should be required to transmit digital at full power on the channel that they plan to keep. Analog broadcasting should be done only on the channel that broadcasters plan to give back. In most cases this will force analog TV to be broadcast at a lower power level than digital.
- (2) Broadcasters who insist on broadcasting a secondary analog channel, should be charged fees for it. Broadcasters who have been unable to simulcast on digital in the past, can only broadcast in digital now.
- (3) Must carry rules should now apply to cable and satellite providers for all digital signals. Analog channels can be made available to customers but only at additional costs. The provider can include a set top box for digital to analog conversion at a cost for those customers who require it.
- (4) The manufacture and sale of all analog only televisions must cease in 2007.

I believe the preceding is a pragmatic approach to the eventual phase out of analog TV.

I commend the efforts of the FCC to further the transition to all digital TV. The new ATSC digital format makes more efficient use of our very limited spectrum and actually requires less output power at the transmitter site. The eventual auction of spectrum will bring much needed revenue and make our precious spectrum available to other users. Another possible benefit is to help preserve free over the air television reception. I suspect we may see more TV antennas going up in households as cable and satellite rates continue to rise. This could have the positive impact of competitive pressure on cable and satellite rates since consumers will now have a viable over the air alternative.